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Session 2024

مناظرة الدخول إلى المرحلة العليا
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Read the following text and then answer the questions which follow

Child labour

1- Ahmed left school at the age of fourteen. Now, he is fifteen and he has been helping his family in farming activities since then. Ahmed is no exception as about 215.000 Tunisian children aged between 5 and 17 years are already economically occupied as of 2017. In our everyday life, we often meet children working, like Ahmed. But have we ever wondered why these children are working at this early age? If they go to school or not? If it is legal to employ them? What the harm of working so early is? What their future is? Indeed, many children around the world enter the adult world by working at an early age, thus losing the opportunity to go to school like other children, enjoy their childhood, and develop mentally and physically in a reasonable manner. This is child labour. Child labour is the exploitation of children through any form of work that interferes with their ability to attend regular school, or is mentally, physically, socially and morally harmful. Such exploitation is prohibited by national legislations and international conventions.

2- Child labour has existed throughout history. Children mainly worked in agriculture, factories, mining, and services. With the rise of the revenue of families, the availability of schools and the adoption of child labour laws, the incidence rates of child labour fell significantly.

3- As of 2023, in the world's poorest countries, around one in five children were engaged in child labour, the highest number of whom lived in sub-Saharan Africa, where more than one in four children were so engaged.

4- Globally, the incidence of child labour decreased from 25% to 10% between 1960 and 2003. Nevertheless, the total number of child labourers remains high, as it was estimated that 168 million children aged 5–17 worldwide were involved in child labour in 2013.

5- Child labour accounts for 22% of the workforce in Asia, 32% in Africa, 17% in Latin America, 1% in the US, Canada, Europe and other wealthy nations. Africa has a total of over 65 million working children.

6- Children are predominantly employed by their parents, rather than factories. Two out of three child workers work alongside their parents, in unpaid family work situation. Boys and girls are equally likely to be involved in child labour, but in different roles, girls being substantially more likely to perform unpaid household labour.

7- Worldwide, agriculture is the largest employer of child labour, in addition to informal urban economies; Some 60 per cent of the child labour was involved in agricultural activities such as farming, dairy, fisheries and forestry. 25% of child labourers were in service activities such as trade, restaurants, transport of goods, storage, picking and recycling trash, such as plastic bottles, polishing shoes and domestic help. The remaining 15% laboured in assembly and manufacturing in informal economy, home-based workshops, factories, mines, operating machinery, and such operations.

8- Poverty is the greatest single cause behind child labour. For poor families, revenue from a child's work is usually crucial for his or her own survival or for that of the family. This revenue, even if small, may be between 25 and 40% of the family revenue. Child labor generally decreases as family wealth increases.

9 - Lack of meaningful alternatives, such as affordable schools and quality education, is another major factor driving children to harmful labour. Children work because they have nothing better to do. Many communities, particularly in rural areas, where between 60 and 70% of child labour is prevalent, do not possess adequate school facilities.

10 - Certain cultural beliefs have grounded child labour. Some view that work is good for the character-building and skill development of children. In many cultures, the cultural tradition is that children follow in their parents' footsteps ; child labour then is a means to learn and practice an economic activity from a very early age.

11- In addition to poverty and unavailability of good schools, the growth of low-paying informal economy rather than higher paying formal economy is also amongst the causes. Children represent cheap and available labour to the informal economy.

12- In Tunisia, children are protected by the constitution, in addition to the labour law and the childhood protection law. As of 2023, and to prevent new cases similar to the case of Ahmed, the government made some advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. It increased its financial assistance for over 500,000 pupils in its back-to-school program to keep children in school. It also convicted and sentenced 18 individuals for child labour crimes. However, the labour inspectorate's budget is inadequate to carry out inspections of child labour, especially in remote areas of the country. In addition, the government lacks a centralized system for digitization of criminal child labour cases, resulting in limited data on investigations, prosecutions, and convictions. Moreover, more needs to be done to remove barriers to education access and reduce child labour risks for rural children in particular.

COMPREHENSION (08 points)

I – Propose a new meaningful title to the text (0. 75 pt)

II- The text mentions four main factors of child labour. What are they? (1 pt, 0.25 pt each)

III- What is the harm of working at an early age? (0. 5 pt)

IV – Why is employing a child considered a crime in Tunisia? (0. 5 pt)

V- In paragraph 10, it is mentioned that « work is good for the character-building and skill development of children ». Do you agree with this idea? Give arguments. (0. 5 pt)

VI- According to you, why are most working children in the agricultural sector? (0. 5 pt)

VII – Find one indication in the text that shows that the contribution of working children is significant in supporting their families (0. 5 pt)

VIII – Do you think that the civil society has a role to play in combating child labour? How? (1 pt)

IX- In facing child labour, the government of Tunisia is taking at the same time preventive measures and punitive measures. Give one example of preventive measures, and one example of punitive measures. (0. 5 pt)

X – In Tunisia, different ministries are involved in combating child labour. Link the ministries to the statements in relation with their functions in the field of child labour:

a) ministry of justice b) ministry of interior c) ministry of education, d) ministry of social affairs
e) ministry of family, women, childhood and the elderly. **(1.25 pt, 0.25 pt each)**

- 1- It inspects work sites to detect cases of child labour
- 2- It intervenes, via its Childhood Delegates, to protect children from any abuse and makes sure that their rights are saved.
- 3- It makes sure that child labour criminals are tried in courts.
- 4- It assists in detecting cases of child labour and reports them to the concerned authorities.
- 5- It prevents school dropouts.

XI – Read the text, and then say whether the following statements are **right or **wrong** and give arguments from the text: (1 pt, 0.25 pt each)**

- a) Most of the children receive payment for their work (**Right/Wrong**)
- b) About 75% of sub-Saharan children are not involved in child labour (**Right/Wrong**)
- c) Among the agricultural activities where child labour is involved, we note transport of goods, storage, picking and recycling trash (**Right/Wrong**)
- d) You hardly find children working in the US, Canada, Europe (**Right/Wrong**)

LANGUAGE (08 points)

I. Choose the right alternative (2.25 pts; 0.25 each)

1. My husband and **me/I** have a secret to make our marriage last.
2. Never take too much care on someone, because you won't be able to stand the pain when **they start/he starts** avoiding you.
3. Will you, please, **let/leave** me alone!
4. Unsatisfied **by/with** the terms of the contract, they started arguing.
5. Whose lorry is blocking the **entry/entrance**?
6. These shoes are too expensive, **are they/aren't they**?
7. He was **sentenced/fined** \$ 250 for speeding.
8. Now she works from home, she doesn't have to **commute/go** by train to and from London every day.
9. Do you mind **to explain / explaining** more?

II. Correct the wrong words or phrases in the following sentences (1.25 pts; 0.25 each)

1. I'm at the age where if you text me after 9 p.m, I will be texting back at 7 a.m.
2. I am agreed with you.
3. I know him good.
4. She is married with a doctor.
5. I have a good news.

III. Put the verbs in brackets in the right tense and form according to English usage (2 pts; 0.25 each)

1. If I had a lot of money, I (like) to own a farm one day.
2. When the power went out, my grandfather (watch) his favorite serial on TV.
3. Will you stop at the next bookseller's; I (buy) a couple of books.
4. Sorry, you (miss) the beginning of the lecture.
5. I (see) the manager for dinner, tonight.
6. Our yoga lessons (start) next Monday.
7. Don't worry! I (handle) all your calls by 7 p.m.
8. Is it the first time your daughter (drive) an electric car?

IV. Fill in each blank with the right preposition (1 pt; 0.25 each)

1. I need the plumber's number. Will you look it _____ in the directory?
2. I see in today's paper that you want a secretary _____ good knowledge in French.
3. She was holding her report _____ both hands.
4. I looked _____ his shoulder and read the headlines.

V. Put the following sentences into the passive voice (0.5 pt; 0.25 each)

1. My assistant is furious. She (leave) with a large number of messages.
2. The boss got the job (do) before noon.

VI. Ask questions about the underlined words (1 pt; 0.25 each)

1. It is going to be my turn.
2. The ferry comes every ten hours.
3. The London bus is departing at 9 a.m.
4. Queen Elizabeth II died three years ago.

WRITING (4 points) (15 - 20 lines).

Education is a constitutional right, as Article 44 of the Constitution provides that “*Education is compulsory to the age of sixteen. The State guarantees the right to free public education at all levels. It shall provide the necessary resources for quality education, teaching and training ...*”.

According to you, what are the major problems that the educational system is facing in Tunisia today and that prevent the total achievement of this constitutional right?